

Statement of Mr. K. Barton Osborn

before the

Senate Armed Services Committee, July 20, 1973

My name is Kenneth Barton Osborn. I have lived in Washington D.C. for the last four years. My present address is 1112 East Capitol St. NE. I come before the Committee today to describe my involvement and first hand knowledge of the Phoenix Program, and to present facts and documents which will show how that program has been one of continued illegal practices, including gross examples of torture and assassination, from 1968 to the present.

Since December, 1970, when I first spoke about the Phoenix Program publically, I have become increasilgly concerned that the Congress and the public be made aware of our country's sponsorship and encouragement of these practices in South East Asia. In August, 1971, I testified before the House Subcommittee on Foreign Operations and Government Information concerning the atrocious treatment of South Vietnamese civilians which I had witnessed in 1968. This is a copy of my testimony along with the follow-up report of the committee. Both of these documents will be discussed in my testimony.

In the next few moments I would like to state to this committee the danger, both to U.S. prestige abroad and to the welfare of many potential victims of programs such as Phoenix, of allowing an individual with the record which Mr. William E. Colby has, to be trusted with the powerful position of Director of Central Intelligence.

Since I am more at ease talking from notes rather than from a prepared text, I would like to provide the members of the Committee with an outline of the testimony I will now begin.

- I. Army Intelligence - 66 to 69 *Jo = E E*
- a. Military Occupational Speciality and training
  - b. Assignment to the 525th Military Intelligence Group
- II. Assignment to DaNang

- a. Cover
- b. Status
- c. Agent Handler job
- d. Liaison with units
- e. Contact with Phoenix

III. Collection of Information

- a. Combat
- b. Political

IV. Dissemination of information

- a. Overlap of military and civilian operations
- b. Follow-up reports (B-52 strikes, search and destroy missions and detainment)

V. Mentality of operatives in Vietnam

- a. mind-set
- b. resulting abuses

VI. Interrogation methods

- a. Three examples
- b. Interpreter

I had recounted these incidents before the House subcommittee hearings in 1971. As a result the subcommittee, under the able chairmanship of Representative William Morehead, directed the DoD to investigate the charges that I had made. Their report, submitted by Assistant Secretary of Defense Doolin to the staff of the Committee 15 months later, was an obvious attempt to minimize the significance of the incidents and even went to some extent to reflect upon my credibility as a witness. If the office of Mr. Doolin is not interested in examining the policies and practices which lead to wide-spread mistreatment of

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Committee will look into the evidence presented today.

It is my contention that while Mr. Colby has consistently claimed that it was his "desire" to improve the Phoenix Program and to discourage the use of torture and assassination, that in fact during his directorship of CORDS/Phoenix and since, that inhumane practices have not only continued but increased. In support of this statement, I would like to present two documents:

\* Newsweek article, July 23, 1973

\* Telegram

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Mr. Colby no doubt maintains that this sort of torture and murder which I witnessed in Vietnam <sup>was</sup> before his time, and that he acted responsibly in dealing with such incidents, but that would be untrue. I call upon Mr. Colby to present evidence that the documents and facts which I have submitted today do not reflect seriously on his ability to apply human values to his duties as a representative of the American people and a public servant.

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